

Wheeled Vehicle Recovery Course

by Second Lieutenant Ronald E. Abiera

Fort Jackson, South Carolina, is the home of the Wheeled Vehicle Recovery Course, which awards additional skill identifier (ASI) H8, wheeled vehicle recovery, to soldiers who have military occupational specialties (MOSs) 63B and 63S (light- and heavy-wheeled vehicle mechanics).



Students attempt to recover a vehicle from the "mire pit."

The mission of the ASI H8 Wheeled Vehicle Recovery Course is to train Active Army, Army National Guard, and Army Reserve enlisted personnel to operate and maintain recovery vehicles and related equipment and to employ standard procedures for rigging, recovering, and towing wheeled vehicles. The 12-day course encompasses 84 hours of classroom and hands-on training and testing on the following tasks—

- Oxygen and acetylene gas welding equipment operations.
- Recovery methods.
- Recovery vehicle preventive maintenance checks and services.
- Recovery vehicle operation.
- Boom and hoist operations.
- Winch operations.
- Mired vehicle recovery.
- Overturned vehicle recovery.
- Disabled vehicle towing.

Recovery training was once part of the 63B and 63S Advanced Individual Training Courses. However, in 1992 the Army Training and Doctrine Command eliminated recovery training from the curriculum, reducing the length of the 63B and 63S courses by 3 weeks each. Since that time, vehicle recovery has been designated as an ASI available to selected personnel in the 63-series MOSs.

During fiscal year 2001, 480 students successfully completed the ASI H8W course. Approximately 95 percent of the graduates were Active Army, while the remaining 5 percent were Army National Guard, Army Reserve, and international military students. Although units throughout the Army may send their soldiers to the course, the majority of the students are new soldiers who are preparing for their first unit assignments. While soldiers of any enlisted rank can attend the course, only those who are E-5 or below receive military credit for attendance.

The primary objective at the recovery training site is to conduct training safely and to standards. The professional and technically proficient noncommissioned officers (NCOs) who make up the cadre of the recovery course ensure that the course meets safety and regulatory standards. The course instructors are all seasoned 63-series NCOs with an average time in service of over 14 years. Though the job is challenging, these NCOs take great pride in their ability to mold hundreds of new soldiers each year into competent wheeled vehicle recovery specialists. **ALOG**

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